THE DELTA WETLANDS PROJECT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
May 25, 2006

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STATE STUDY REAFFIRMS TECHNICAL FEASIBILITY OF DELTA WATER PROJECT

"In-Delta Storage" First Surface Storage Project To Be Found Feasible

Sacramento, CA – One of California's critically needed water storage and supply projects advanced today as state agencies studying the In-Delta Storage Project reaffirmed the project is technically feasible, can provide significant statewide benefits, and significantly reduce the risk of levee failure.

"In-Delta Storage is the most thoroughly examined, understood and permitted of the five potential water storage projects under contemplation by the state," said Anson Moran, general manager for the In-Delta Storage Project. "The project offers the Schwarzenegger Administration and Legislature a real option today to start seriously planning for our future water supply and security."

The California Bay-Delta Authority ("CBDA") and the California Department of Water Resources ("DWR"), with technical assistance from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, conducted a State Feasibility Study of the In-Delta Storage Project in 2003/2004. The report concluded that the project is technically feasible, will provide significant statewide benefits and can be built safely. During the 2004/2005 year, the agencies conducted additional studies on water quality, risk analysis and project operations to address questions raised after the release of the State Feasibility Report. The Supplemental Report, made public today, stated:

> *"DWR reaffirms its prior finding that the In-Delta Storage Project is technically feasible. DWR is satisfied that it can safely design, construct and operate an In-Delta Storage Project."* (Source: DWR's Executive Summary, Supplemental Report To In-Delta Storage Project State Feasibility Study, May 2006)

In addition, key findings of the Supplemental Report include:

- *There is a significant reduction (by factor of 6 to 10) in risk of levee failure from strengthening 56 miles of critical Delta levees.*
- *Water quality will be better than previously estimated and will get better over time.*
- *Seepage control measures incorporated within the project were found to be adequate to protect surrounding landowners. Observation of the Jones Tract levee failure validated models used in previous estimates.*

"It's important to note that In-Delta Storage is much more than a water storage project," added Moran. "In addition to helping create new water supplies for California, the In-Delta Storage Project is uniquely able to provide a variety of other benefits that also meet broad CalFed objectives for the Delta including improving levee stability, enhancing ecosystem restoration, facilitating water transfers, and providing recreational opportunities."

According to the State Feasibility Study and Supplemental Report, the In-Delta Storage Project could:

- *Provide additional, new water supplies for urban and agricultural interests. Per operating agreements with urban water agencies, the project will comply and even exceed all existing drinking water quality standards for the Delta.*
- *Provide 217,000 acre-feet of new storage capacity, able to capture and store excess water (typically during storms or other events that produce large flows through the Delta) and also releases from overflowing upstream reservoirs that would otherwise be lost.*
- *Provide water to support CalFed's Environmental Water Account, protecting fish at sensitive times and ensuring deliveries to water users are not impacted.*
- *Improve operational flexibility of the state and federal projects.*
- *Improve Delta water quality (i.e. salinity), by releasing fresh water into the Delta in a timely and flexible manner.*
- *Provide temporary storage for water transfers, aiding state water users who have not had enough storage opportunities.*
- *Improve quality and availability of habitat for fish and other wildlife living in the Bay-Delta eco-system.*
- *Provide additional water to support CalFed's Ecosystem Restoration Program and federal wildlife refuges.*
- *Reduce risk of regional flood damage, diverting water onto the reservoir islands during high flow season and lowering water in adjoining channels.*
- *Improve seismic stability of existing levees, reducing the risk of levee failure and associated saltwater intrusion from the San Francisco Bay.*
- *Benefit state and federal projects by helping meet Delta water quality standards, adding water into the system that the projects would otherwise have to provide.*
- *Provide regional recreational benefits.*
- *Be built safely. The project will meet all state and federal criteria for safety and risk factors, ensuring protection of neighboring properties.*

Moving forward, the Supplemental Report acknowledged the In-Delta Storage Project is at a much advanced stage compared to other potential projects and recommended holding on any future study until a fair comparison can be made with other projects and potential water users are identified. A copy of the report can be obtained at: http://www.calwater.ca.gov/Programs/Storage/InDeltaStorageReports.shtml

Given its benefits, continued investigation of the In-Delta Storage Project has been supported by numerous business, civic, labor and environmental organizations, including the California Business Roundtable, California Teamsters, California Business Properties Association, California Waterfowl Association, California Chamber of Commerce, California Council for Environmental and Economic Balance, California State Council of Laborers, San Joaquin River Group, California-Nevada Conference of Operating Engineers, Silicon Valley Leadership Group, and Ducks Unlimited.

For more information on In-Delta Storage, please visit its web site at www.deltawetlands.com.